



# 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit

## Commander's Corner

SEPTEMBER 2009



The MEU completed its turnover of major subordinate elements on the 22nd and 23 of August. Our new Ground Combat Element is Battalion Landing Team 2/5 (BLT 2/5) from Camp Pendleton, CA; our new Aviation Combat Element is Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 265 (HMM-265 (REIN)) based at MCAS Futenma with reinforcing attachments from HMLA-267 and HMH-465 out of California; and our Logistics Combat Element remains Combat Logistics Battalion 31 (CLB-31) based at Camp Hansen. I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome all of our new Marines and Sailors as well as their family members to the MEU. The 31st MEU is one of seven Marine Expeditionary Units in the Marine Corps and it is the only one that is continuously forward deployed overseas. It is also unique in that it is made up of personnel permanently stationed in Okinawa as well as units on six month rotations from the continental U.S. and Hawaii. All this means that the operational tempo of the 31st MEU is consistently high with the MEU being deployed away from Okinawa on average six months out of every year.

The area of operations for the 31st MEU covers the western Pacific and eastern Indian Oceans. As a primary contingency response force for the U.S. Pacific Command, the MEU trains for and is operationally ready to accomplish a wide range of military operations to include amphibious assaults, non-combatant evacuation operations, and humanitarian assistance/disaster relief missions. The MEU deploys on ships of the USS Essex Amphibious Ready Group which is based in Sasebo, Japan. This year's fall patrol will commence the last week in Sep-

tember and will continue until just before Thanksgiving. Marines and Sailors of the MEU will travel to the Republic of the Philippines to participate in a bilateral training exercise with the Armed Forces of the Philippines and to the Republic of Korea to conduct an exercise with the Republic of Korea Armed Forces. As always, our schedule could change based on the requirement to respond to a contingency anywhere within the area of operations.

Our 31st MEU Family Readiness Program exists to provide timely information and referral support to MEU families. During all of our MEU deployments, I will pass as much information to our families in as timely a manner as possible within the bounds of operational security. All spouses and immediate family members will have equal access to the information. I generally try to send out an e-mail update just prior to deployment, just after getting underway, whenever we get on or off ship for an exercise, and just prior to our return to Okinawa. You may also contact the MEU Command Element's full-time civilian Family Readiness Officer, Mr. Rich Palma, at any time at the contact numbers listed in this newsletter.

Once again, to all of our new families I extend a warm welcome aboard. For those that have been here for a while, I appreciate your support and sacrifices on behalf of your Marine or Sailor and the 31st MEU.

Colonel Paul L. Damren, USMC

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### NOTABLE DATES

Obon (Okinawa)	1-3 Sept
Labor Day (U.S.)	7 Sept
Pre-Deployment Brief (Command Element)	9 Sept
Okinawa City Eisa Festival	11-13 Sept
Kinser Festival	19-20 Sept
Respect for Age Day (Japan)	21 Sept
Spouses Night Out (Command Element)	21 Sept
National Day (Japan)	22 Sept
MEU Departs	28 Sept



# ***31st Marine Expeditionary Unit***

## ***Deployment Information***

### **DEPLOYMENT CONTACT NUMBERS**

Family Readiness Officer	Mr. Rich Palma
Cell Phone	080-1794-9631
Family Readiness Hotline	623-9110

### **INTERNATIONAL DIALING**

Family Readiness Officer	011-81-80-1794-9631
Family Readiness Hotline	011-81-611-723-9110
Deployment E-mail address:	<a href="mailto:fro@essex.usmc.mil">fro@essex.usmc.mil</a>

## **PRE-DEPLOYMENT BRIEF**

**9 SEPTEMBER 7 p.m.**

## **COURTNEY CHAPEL**

**MANDATORY** for all Command Element personnel who are married on accompanied orders who have not previously attended the MEU pre-deployment brief. Spouses are highly encouraged to attend.

Our Command Representatives will discuss:

- Postal Procedures
- Requesting EML Orders for family members
- Marine Cash Cards aboard ship
- Split pay
- Changes in housing status
- I.D. card request
- Email addresses aboard ship
- Will's and Powers of Attorney
- Deployment schedule
- Important points of contact while underway

*Briefs will be given by the following organizations:*

American Red Cross	Counseling & Advocacy
Legal Services	Military Family Life Consultant
Personal Service Center	31st MEU Administrative Section
31st MEU Computer Assurance Section	

**FREE ON SITE CHILD CARE PROVIDED !!!!!**

Please email or call [richard.palma@usmc.mil](mailto:richard.palma@usmc.mil) 623-4990 with number of children by

C.O.B. 7 Sept 2009 so that we have the appropriate number of child care providers on site.



# 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit

## Family Events



### Spouses Night Out



**All Marine and Navy spouses from the MEU Command Element are invited to a casual dinner/social to meet other MEU spouses.**

When: Monday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Where: Tengan Castle, Camp Courtney

Don't be shy...our goal is to make everyone feel welcome and to leave with at least one or two new friends. Please come join the fun!

No need to worry about childcare!! Married Marines and Sailors will be dismissed early from work to watch the kids at home while you enjoy a relaxing evening out that includes free dinner, drinks and lots of door prizes.

Attire is summer casual. Save the date! We'll see you there!

RSVP by 16 Sept to [richard.palma@usmc.mil](mailto:richard.palma@usmc.mil) or 623-4990 with your choice of grilled steak, chicken, fish, or vegetarian meal.



### スパウスナイトへのご招待



**MEU コマンド分隊所属 海兵隊および海軍の奥様方！  
カジュアルで楽しい夕食交流会に参加しませんか？**

日時: 9月21日 (月) 午後 6時～8時

場所: キャンプ コートニー テンガンキャッスル

しり込みせずに☆ 楽しみながら他のMEUの奥様方との交流の輪を広げる絶好のチャンスです！心安らぐ、ゆったりとしたひとときをお過ごし下さい。

お子様の心配もいりません。当日はご主人方も早めに勤務を終え、その夜はお子様のベビーシッターをいたしますので、のんびりと楽しい時間をお過ごしいただけます。

**参加費は無料、お食事、お飲み物、さらに豪華賞品も用意しています♪**

夏のカジュアルな服装でお越し下さい☆今すぐカレンダーをチェック！

恐れ入りますが、出欠の確認を**9月16日までに** [richard.palma@usmc.mil](mailto:richard.palma@usmc.mil) または 623-4990までお願い致します。出席の場合、夕食のメニューをグリルステーキ、チキン、魚、ベジタリアンからお選び下さい。



# 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit

## On-Island Tours

[CLICK HERE](#) for Kadena ITT

[CLICK HERE](#) for Tours +

### Forest Adventure Park

Sunday, September 13, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

\$49 per Adult, \$34 per child (7-17)

Okinawa's newest thrilling athletic park, the Forest Adventure Park. Test your courage on the Zip Slide, Amazon Rope Bridge, Tibetan Bridge, or any other of the exciting courses. Children must be at least 6 years of age and 55 inches in height. No persons over 285lbs. Are allowed on the courses. Bring yen for lunch (Y1030) and spending.

[www.forest-adventure-onna.jp](http://www.forest-adventure-onna.jp)

For more information, call Tours+ at 646-3502.

### ISLAND TRANSPORTATION 101

Sunday, Sep 6 8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Ad \$10 Ch(0-2) \$5

Join us for a guided tour of the Okinawa commercial bus and rail transit system. Master the basics of riding the bus and monorail while learning the etiquette of using commercial transportation. The tour will begin at a local bus stop, get off at Kokusai Street, board the monorail, eat lunch at the airport, get back on the monorail, shop at Kokusai Street for an hour, then ride the bus back to Camp Foster.

Call MCCS Tours + 646-3502

### Legends of the Ryukyu Islands

Sunday, September 27, 9 am - 5 pm

Price: Ad \$21, Ch (3-11) \$14,  
Ch (0-2) \$5

Start off with a visit to Seifa Utaki, one of Okinawa's most sacred sites and a location where Ryukyu Kings would often preside over religious ceremonies. Have lunch and enjoy the view at Kurukuma Café. Then travel to Shuri Castle and Shikina-en, the summer palace of the Ryukyuan Kings. Bring yen for entrance fees (Y1300) and lunch.

Call MCCS Tours + at 646-3502

### Asian Spa



**Friday, Sept 25, 11:00 ~ 17:00**

Tours Plus, 646-3502 Price: Ad \$41, \$24 (3-11), *No children under 3 are permitted in the Spa.*

Relax in more than a dozen kinds of salt water pools both indoor and out, including herbal baths, jet pools, scented showers, and plunge pools. Enjoy an optional facial (cleansing, peeling, suction, massage or skin toning) and body massage (seawater Jacuzzi and oil massage of the back). Shampoo, toothbrushes, razors, soap and towels are provided. Bring a bathing suit, cap, and yen for food and drinks.

### UNINHABITED ISLAND TOUR



Saturday, September 5, 0800 - 1700

Call MCCS Tours + for more details at 646-3502

Experience the exotic nature of uninhabited Island Nagannu. Enjoy a variety of marine activities such as banana boats, jet skis, and the U-tube (one ride per activity included in tour price). Bring lunch, hydration, snorkeling set, and wetsuits (if desired). Please wear appropriate footwear.

Call MCCS Tours + 646-3502

### Okinawan Cuisine Buffet & Ryukyuan Dance

**Friday, September 11 5 p.m. - 10 p.m.**

Ad \$64, Ch \$33(3-11), \$5(0-2)

Enjoy the varied flavors of Okinawan cuisine buffet while being entertained by traditional music and dancers. Eisa dance is performed by Zampa daiko group at Manza Beach resort hotel in Okinawa. The tour price includes dinner, soft drinks and show. Bring yen for optional drinks.

Call MCCS Tours + 646-3502





# 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit Specials

For the dog days of summer...a dog's day at the pool.



## Pet Plunge

September 12, 2-5 p.m.  
Plaza Pool

### Special events:

**Quickest Fetch**  
(small and large breed)

**Farthest Jump**  
(small and large breed)



For more information, check out [www.mccsokinawa.com](http://www.mccsokinawa.com).

MCCS ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

Direct from the Philippines

# Myxed

VARIETY BAND

**FREE LIVE Performance!**

**Camp Hansen**  
Tuesdays, 8-11 p.m.

**MCS Futemma**  
Wednesdays, 8-11 p.m.

**Camp Kinser**  
Thursdays, 8-11 p.m.

**Camp Schwab**  
Fridays, 10 p.m.-1 a.m.

**Camp Foster**  
September 5, 12 & 26.  
10 p.m.-1 a.m.

**Kinser Festival**  
September 19 & 20

\*At different MCCS clubs throughout the island.  
MCCS Entertainment 645-5821

[www.mccsokinawa.com](http://www.mccsokinawa.com)

## BE GREAT: Celebrate!

Mothers have a day. Fathers have a day.  
Even groundhogs have a day.  
Isn't it time that kids have their own day too?

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS  
**Day for Kids**

[www.dayforkids.org](http://www.dayforkids.org)

Join the celebration! Make time to bring the special child in your life to a Boys & Girls Clubs Day for Kids event.

**Date:** Saturday, September 12

**Time:** 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

**Location:** Camp Foster Field House



For More Information Call: your local SAC or Youth & Teen Center

NAVY ENTERTAINMENT, ARMED FORCES ENTERTAINMENT,  
AND MCCS ENTERTAINMENT PRESENT

# flo rida

[www.officiatflo.com](http://www.officiatflo.com)

**FREE event**



## WHEN I SAY JUMP ...

Shattering digital sales records but taking nothing for granted, Flo Rida gives fans hot music.

**Friday, October 2**  
**Globe & Anchor**  
**Doors open at 8 p.m.**

House DJ TRE & DJ Vader  
For more information, call 645-5821.  
[www.mccsokinawa.com](http://www.mccsokinawa.com)



NAVY  
Entertainment



COMING TO A THEATER NEAR YOU.  
Tell us how you liked the show at [www.armedforcesentertainment.com](http://www.armedforcesentertainment.com)



# 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit

## Extras

### Welcome Aboard

SSgt David Townsend and his wife Jennifer

Sgt Louis Flores and his wife Angela

HM3 Anthony Bunkley and his wife Jessica

Cpl Richard Dennis and his wife Emily

Cpl Brandon Chavez and his wife Jessi

LCpl Mark Dambrosio and his wife Allison

Capt Erik Walker	SSgt Dylan Wismer	Sgt Calvin Chandler
Cpl Scott Hall	Cpl Jonathan Itzhaky	Cpl Patrick Bresette
Cpl Grady Campbell	Cpl Bret Fugate	Cpl Brearley Cameron
LCpl Davesylvn Decker II	LCpl Jonathan Aton	LCpl Justin Crawford
LCpl Natasha Hale	LCpl David Chapman	LCpl Jacob Shearer
LCpl Barry Patrick	LCpl Alden Contreras	LCpl Gregory May
LCpl Anthony Escojeda	LCpl Patrick Hoyt	PFC Jeffrey Ritucci
PFC Ethan Soucy	PFC Joshua Scott	PFC Jacob Betancourt
PFC James Knapp	PFC Zachary Mellin	PFC Cody Cauicchi
PFC Chris Osborn	PFC Heather Campos	

### MARINE JARGON

Boot Lewy – 2nd Lieutenant

Brown Bagger – Married Marine

Geedunk - Another term for food, usually a snack

Go Fasters - Running Shoes

Lifer - Career Marine

Moon Beam - Flashlight

### SEPTEMBER PROMOTIONS



Staff Sergeant  
Scott R. Davenport



Sergeant  
Gabriel J. Thompson



Corporal  
Conor L. Feeley  
Eric J. Taylor



Lance Corporal  
Danial D. Barker  
Cody T. Cavicchi  
Bennie L. Cloud  
Zachary T. Mellin  
Christopher D. Osborn

### ON BASE PREFIX

622 (954)  
623 (969)  
645 (970)  
646 (971)  
634 (961)  
632 (962)  
633 (959)

To dial on base from a off base number is easy. No need to call the operator, just replace the prefix with the corresponding off-base access number. For example.  
623-4990 would be 969-4990.

### New Arrivals

SSgt Freeman and his wife Erica  
daughter Elizabeth Ann Rose Freeman  
8 lbs, 21 in. born on 18 Sep 2009  
at 8:34 p.m.





# 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit

## Notices

### Typhoon Motors 24 Hour Island Wide Towing

090-3794-2556

### Homecoming Workshop for Spouses

Excitement and anticipation fills the air as the time for your Service member to return draws near. This brief will provide a wealth of homecoming information for spouses to assist with identifying realistic expectations and changes that have occurred during the deployment, and how to recognize signs of combat operational stress.

03 Sept, Thursday 5 - 7:30 p.m.

01 Oct, Thursday 5 - 7:30 p.m.

Lester Chapel Annex Bldg 6051

Call 645-7494

### IMPORTANT PHONE DIRECTORY

Foster PSC	645-2104
Kinser PSC	637-2815
Hansen PSC	623-4522/4860
Schwab PSC	625-2622/2646

### LIBRARIES

Foster	645-7178	Hansen	623-7372
Courtney	622-9280	Kinser	637-1039
Futenma	636-3946	Schwab	625-2518

### Ultimate Job Search

Join us in our workshop designed to help you begin your job search by improving your search techniques, enabling you to find your dream job!

Wed, Sept 16, 1 - 4 p.m.

Foster PSC 645-3151

Thurs, Sept 24, 1 - 4 p.m.

Courtney PSC 622-7878

### Coupon Program

On a weekly basis, MCCS receives literally thousands of coupons through the mail from independent organizations stateside who care about the military community and support their popular Coupon Program. Stop by any PSC to pickup a package, the coupons can be used up to 6 months after the expiration date!

### Loan Locker

Are you new to the island or preparing to PCS and wondering how to get by without having your household goods on hand? Our Relocation Assistance Center Loan Locker is here to provide basic home items such as pots, pans, dishes, flatware and tumblers to incoming and outbound command sponsored personnel until they have access to their household goods shipment. Car seats, strollers and high chairs are also available. Items are checked out for a 30 day period and may be extended an additional 30 days, if necessary. A copy of service member's orders are required to receive items. The incoming service member's sponsor on Okinawa may obtain these items in advance with a copy of the PCS orders. Call your nearest PSC for more information.

### MCCS Personal Service Center

**Have specific questions about your investments?  
Want to know you're on the right track with your  
money? Need help with debt reduction?**

**Call or email to make an appointment with a**

**PROFESSIONAL FINANCIAL CONSULTANT**

**Phone: 080-4099-2359**

Email: [mccspersonalfinance@Okinawa.usmc-mccs.org](mailto:mccspersonalfinance@Okinawa.usmc-mccs.org)



# *31st Marine Expeditionary Unit*

## *On-Line Resources*

[www.marines.mil/units/marforpac/iiimef/31stmeu/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.marines.mil/units/marforpac/iiimef/31stmeu/Pages/default.aspx)

This is the official 31st MEU website! Save this link to your "Favorites" on your computer. The website is updated frequently to keep you informed on what your Marine or Sailor is doing at work.

[www.mccsokinawa.com](http://www.mccsokinawa.com)

This site offers a ton of information about what is being offered on all Marine Corps bases on the island. The site has links and information for over 80 MCCS programs offered on Okinawa.

[www.kadenaservices.com](http://www.kadenaservices.com)

Provides information about activities and services the Air Force offers to all military members and their families here on Okinawa. It also contains links to Army MWR events on Torii Station and Okuma's online reservation page. Click on PETS to get links to the Vet Clinics and Karing Kennels.

[www.japanupdate.com](http://www.japanupdate.com)

Provides updates on what's going on Okinawa.

[www.okinawahai.com](http://www.okinawahai.com)

This website is designed by military spouses for military spouses on Okinawa.

[www.mcbbutler.usmc.mil](http://www.mcbbutler.usmc.mil)

Provides valuable information on policies and procedures that apply directly to all residents stationed on Marine Corps bases Japan.

[www.okinawa.pac.dodea.edu](http://www.okinawa.pac.dodea.edu)

This site can answer any question you might have pertaining to the on-base school system on Okinawa

[www.aafes.com/ems/pac/okinawa.htm](http://www.aafes.com/ems/pac/okinawa.htm)

This site is your resource for Army Air force Exchange Services (AAFES)

[www.okinawayardsales.com](http://www.okinawayardsales.com)

Great site to buy used items and sell your unwanted items.

[www.uso.org/usoonpatrol/index.html](http://www.uso.org/usoonpatrol/index.html)

USO on-line magazine